

JEFFERSON B. FORDHAM

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In December of 1969, at the annual meeting of the Association of American Law Schools, Jefferson Fordham conferred upon Earl Warren a special AALS citation. In the course of his gracious words of tribute, Dean Fordham noted that the Chief Justice possesses "in superlative combination . . . humility, integrity, and courage, and the one I stress most is humility."

These qualities also characterize Fordham. And here too it is appropriate to stress humility. If Fordham were not so ardent a protagonist of the first amendment, he doubtless would have undertaken to burn each copy of a magazine devoted to the subversive end of publicly honoring him. Nothing that the best of advocates can say will persuade Fordham that he is one cubit out of the ordinary. So those of us who are privileged to participate in this cabal to acclaim him will have to recognize that Fordham will simply ignore these pages of his school's illustrious *Review*.

But if we cannot reach Fordham, perhaps we can speak to his fellow citizens, and most especially to his colleagues at the bar. For it is necessary and proper publicly to affirm that Jefferson Fordham has conferred distinction upon the law.

Those who work in the realms of public law—public officials, practitioners, and students and teachers of law—know the magnitude and the influential quality of Fordham's scholarly achievements. Yet these achievements take second place when measured against the brilliant leadership he has given to two major law schools. Fordham's five years as dean of Ohio State were years of important accomplishment; but they were only a prelude to his eighteen years as dean at Pennsylvania. It is here, in guiding the renaissance of this great Law School, that Fordham has come into his own. What Pound and Frankfurter did for Harvard, what Stone did for Columbia, what Swann and Corbin and Hutchins and Clark did for Yale, Fordham did for Pennsylvania. Today the Pennsylvania Law School stands rebuilt—intellectually and physically. It is a monument to a gentle and indomitable man. But the key to this achievement does not lie in Fordham's ambition for his school. It lies in his devotion to the law—and to the nation which law and lawyers serve.

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What distinguishes Fordham from others who teach and practice law is his dedication to the law's highest purposes and his readiness to put that dedication to work across the board. The same energy and wisdom which have rebuilt his own Law School have been put to the service of all law schools—over which, as President of the AALS, he now presides. But Fordham also invests his remarkable skills in the public sector: as when he drafts a new state constitution, or pushes the American Bar Association to demonstrate its active commitment to the Bill of Rights by establishing a permanent Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities. Fordham realizes that training lawyers and writing about law are processes which have meaning only in the application of law to the nation's pressing problems. In a time of testing for the law itself, Jefferson Fordham has shown his brothers at the bar what it means to be a lawyer—the sort of lawyer for whom there is no higher or more demanding calling.